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THE CHICKEN FARMER

Trans-Pacific Partnership Update

On February 4, 2016, Canada's International Trade Minister, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, officially signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement in Auckland, New Zealand, along with her counterparts from the other 11 TPP Member countries (Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam).

Although this is a significant milestone for the trade agreement, the signing of the TPP does not mean that it has been ratified, or yet come into effect.

Signing the agreement is a technical step in the ratification process that sets into motion a two-year timeline during which TPP Members will be working to build domestic buy-in for the trade pact and setting into motion the legislative changes required for the agreement to enter into force. In Canada, it also allows for the text to be tabled in Parliament for discussion and debate.

If and when the TPP does finally enter into effect, its original signatories will be the only ones who qualify for the rules related to entry into force of the agreement; new entrants may face a different set of rules. Minister Freeland cited this condition as the reason for Canada's decision to sign the text.

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Chicken Farmers of Canada
Les Producteurs de poulet du Canada

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While the Minister remains steadfast to the Liberal government's commitment to consulting with Canadians as well as conducting a full Parliamentary Committee study and debate before considering whether to proceed with its ratification, she wants to be certain that should Canada decide to ratify the TPP, it does so as an original signatory.

SIGNING THE AGREEMENT IS A TECHNICAL STEP IN THE RATIFICATION PROCESS THAT SETS INTO MOTION A TWO-YEAR TIMELINE DURING WHICH TPP MEMBERS WILL BE WORKING TO BUILD DOMESTIC BUY-IN FOR THE TRADE PACT

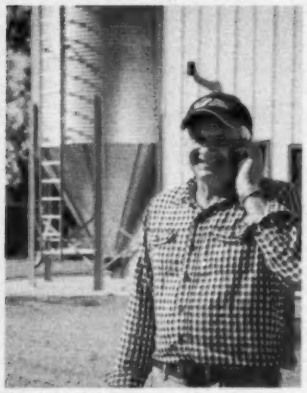
The agreement will enter into effect 60 days after all signatories ratify the agreement. However, if all Members have not done so by the February 4, 2018 deadline, the agreement would still come into force 60 days after that date as long as it has been ratified by at least six TPP Member countries that together make up more than 85% of the total group's GDP.

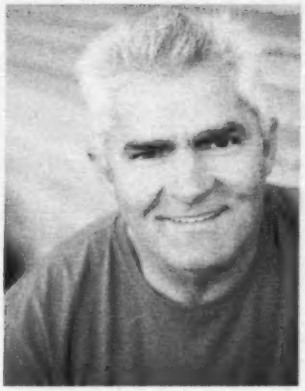
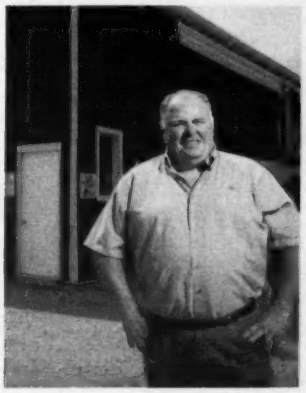
In essence, this means that both Japan and the U.S., which together account for nearly 80% of the total group's GDP, must ratify the agreement for it to become operational at all.

So while the rest of the signatory countries are undertaking the various domestic processes required for them to move towards ratifying the deal – with Japan's Prime Minister Abe leading the way with his intention to have the TPP ratified before the current Diet (or parliament's) session comes to an end in June this year – most eyes are understandably on the U.S. and its domestic deliberations on the agreement.

American President Barak Obama is cautiously optimistic that the U.S. Congress will approve the TPP agreement by the end of 2016. However, outstanding concerns about aspects of the deal, such as the lack of specific restrictions on currency manipulation, are compounding with the challenges posed by the upcoming U.S. presidential elections to undermine the President's hopes. Currently, only one out of the six leading presidential candidates, John Kasich (Republican), has stated his full support for the ratification of the TPP.

Given the U.S.'s uncertainty about the TPP, as well as Canada's own domestic consultation on the agreement, it is understandable that the Canadian government is proceeding cautiously in its deliberation about whether to eventually ratify the TPP or not.



2016 Chicken Farmers of Canada Board of Directors

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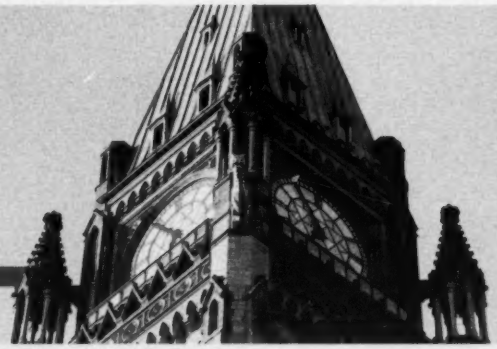
Canadian Poultry Research Council – Tim Keet

NEWS FROM THE HILL



Chicken Farmers of Canada Sponsors Parliament Hill Program for Youth

Earlier this year, Chicken Farmers of Canada partnered with Egg Farmers of Canada as the Visionary Sponsors for the 2016 Forum for Young Canadians program which took place in Ottawa through February and March.

Each year, Forum for Young Canadians welcomes hundreds of high school students from across Canada who are seeking a unique experience to learn first-hand about governance and the Parliamentary process. During their stay in Ottawa, students meet with Members of Parliament and Senators, learn about industry-government relations, and forge new relationships with other young motivated Canadians, among many other exciting activities.

At the MP reception, we took the opportunity to highlight our sponsorship, as well as network with MPs, Ministers, and Parliamentary Secretaries who had student constituents in the program or ties to the Forum. There are currently a record number of MPs that are Forum alumni, including Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly.

As part of the sponsorship, Chicken Farmers of Canada staff presented during the sessions on "The Politics of Food," in order to educate students on how their choices at the grocery store sends a message of support to government for Canada's farmers. The presentation concluded with a case study so that students could further discuss and present their findings on the benefits of supply management, the importance of farming, and social responsibility.

Chicken Farmers of Canada was proud to be a part of this great initiative for youth and looks forward to further educating Canada's students on where their food comes from.

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As an active member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Chicken Farmers of Canada attended the 2016 Annual General Meeting held in Ottawa in late February.

The delegation hosted presentations by Conservative Agriculture critic, Chris Warkentin, NDP leader Tom Mulcair, and included a panel discussion between Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lawrence MacAulay and Mexico's Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, Jose Eduardo Calzada Rovirosa. Moderated by Fred Gorrell, from the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Ministers touched on the importance of innovation and research, trade, and responding to consumer demands in agriculture, and how our two countries have the power to help feed the world.

Both Warkentin and Mulcair highlighted their parties' commitments to agriculture and supply management, while Mulcair stressed the importance of developing a pan-Canadian food strategy and better investments in young farmers.

Chicken Farmers of Canada, along with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, supports our new government's approach to *Growing Forward 2* and keeping Canadian food at the highest standards worldwide.

CHICKEN FARMERS OF CANADA BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FEDERAL FINANCE MINISTER

With a federal budget looming in early 2016, Canada's new government hit the road, consulting Canadians on what they would like to see in the country's upcoming fiscal projection. Finance Minister Bill Morneau and Parliamentary Secretary François-Philippe Champagne travelled from coast to coast to hear suggestions on what types of investments the federal government should be considering in order to grow the economy and support the middle class.

Chicken Farmers of Canada made a pre-budget submission to the Department of Finance to provide recommendations on how the government can assist our industry in combatting the fraudulent practices that are hindering chicken production, and job creation.

Chicken Farmers of Canada highlighted how, by closing the loopholes caused by the Duties Referral Program, spent fowl and specially defined mixtures, the government had an opportunity to create jobs, encourage investment, and grow the economy.

The Standing Committee on Finance also welcomed stakeholders to appear as witnesses and submit recommendations for consideration. While Chicken Farmers of Canada were unable to present before committee, they were provided with a copy of our submission, which Dave Janzen and staff also had the opportunity to outline in meetings with some of its members.

JOINT ANNUAL RECEPTION WITH SM-4 PARTNERS

This year's Joint Annual Reception of the four national poultry agencies – Chicken Farmers of Canada, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, Egg Farmers of Canada, and Turkey Farmers of Canada took place on March 23rd, at the Fairmont Château Laurier in Ottawa.

This annual event welcomed attendees from all over the agriculture sector, including key political and departmental staff, stakeholders from other non-supply managed commodities, and many industry suppliers. Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lawrence MacAulay was on hand to give remarks and reaffirm the government's continued support for supply management.

The Joint Annual Reception provides farmers and industry stakeholders with an opportunity to highlight the important work they do with Canada's elected officials. It also provides a showcase of excellent dishes prepared with Canadian chicken, turkey, and eggs.

Students Develop Immune-Enhancing Technique for Chicks

When Thushari Gunawardana and Kalhari Goonewardene were University classmates back in Sri Lanka, they never imagined they'd meet again in the same veterinary school in Canada.

THE POTENTIAL FOR THE NEW MOLECULE TO PROTECT ANIMAL HEALTH HAS RAISED THE INTEREST OF THE FEDERAL AGENCY NSERC, WHICH PROVIDED MAJOR FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT.

Now they are working together as PhD students at the University of Saskatchewan on finding alternatives to antibiotics to prevent young chickens from getting sick with bacterial diseases.

"Just like little babies, chickens can get sick with many infections, especially during the first week of their life," said Goonewardene. "It is the most crucial time of their growth."

Some commercial hatcheries formerly used antibiotics to prevent bacterial diseases in hatchlings. But in May 2014, the poultry industry voluntarily abandoned this practice to limit the use of antibiotics in poultry and the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria – a health risk to humans.

Over the last 12 years, the students' supervisor, Susantha Gomis, has developed a synthetic, non-infectious bacterial DNA molecule to boost disease immunity in chicks.

Now Gomis is using the molecule to trigger the chicks' immune system and shield them from possible infections. Unlike vaccines, which usually target only one disease, the molecule prepares chickens to fight a broad range of bacteria.

This new technique is poised to dramatically decrease economic losses for producers. Because egg injections cause minimal stress to baby chicks, they will be better able to fight infections as soon as they leave the hatchery.

The molecule could also help the Canadian poultry industry find alternatives to antibiotics to protect chickens' health.

The students are now working to increase the effectiveness of the molecule and its absorption in the chicks' bodies. To do so, they are 'coating' the molecule with microscopic particles between one and 100 nanometers in size.

The students found the molecule quickly protected the chicks, and did so with a survival rate close to 80 per cent, compared to 30 per cent for non-treated hatchlings.

The molecule has to be directly injected into chicken eggs before they hatch. Egg injections

Thushari Gunawardana (left) and Kalhari Goonewardene (right) injecting eggs with a new molecule to boost disease-immunity in baby chicks (photo: David Stobbe for the University of Saskatchewan)

are a cheap, well-known practice in the veterinary field, but using an immunity-boosting DNA molecule combined with nanotechnology is innovative.

The team has already filed a patent for this new technique, and the next step will be a larger field trial.

They are also trying a different aerosol-based technique that allows the chicks to breathe in the molecule. This approach has shown promising results. Western Economic Diversification Canada is investing in its development.

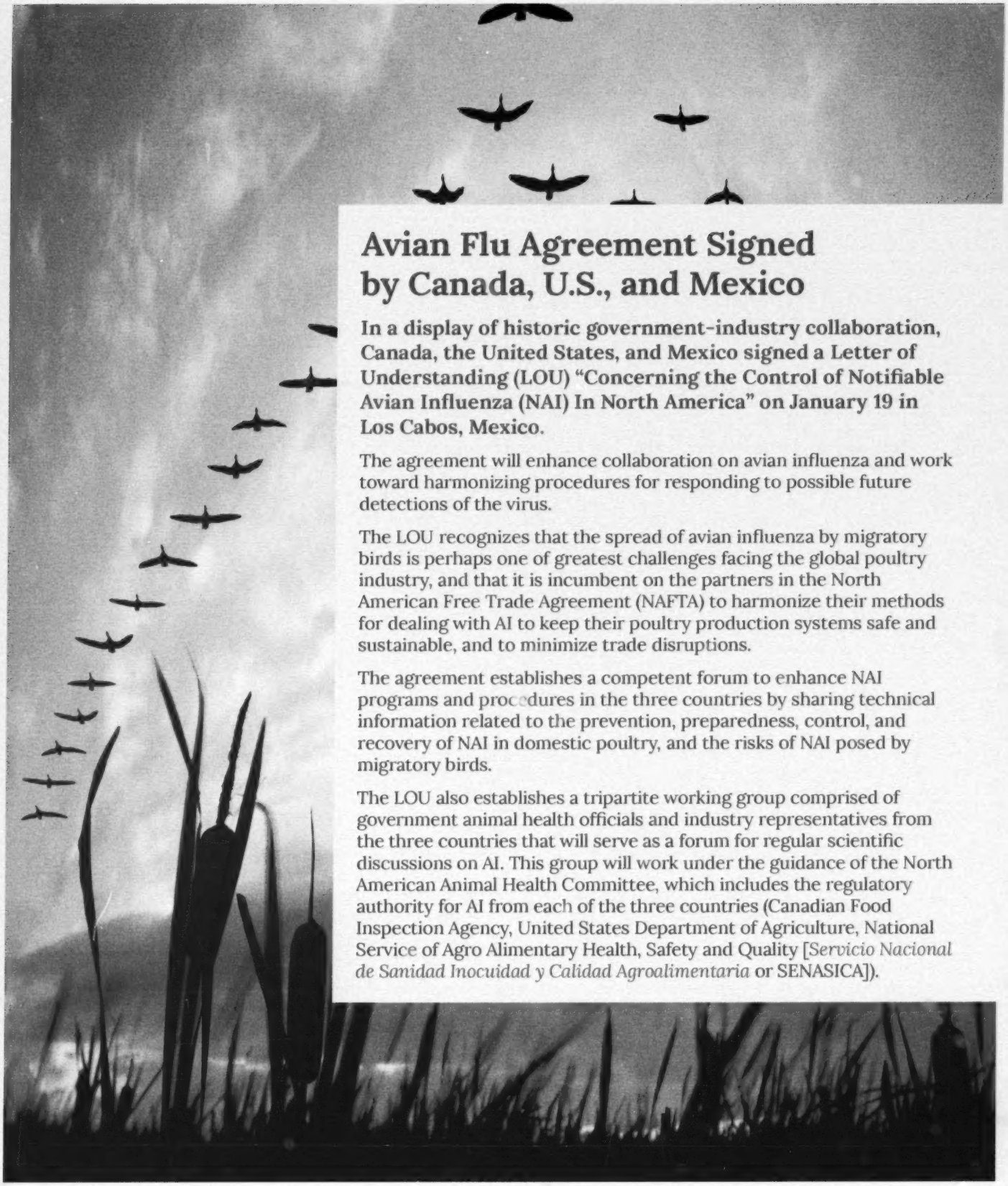
The potential for the new molecule to protect animal health has raised the interest of the federal agency NSERC, which provided major funding for the project. Other partners include the Canadian Poultry Research Council, Chickens Farmers of Saskatchewan, the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency and Alberta Chicken Producers.

Gunawardana and Goonewardene are a winning team at work and in their everyday life, helping each other adapt to the challenges of a new culture.

"We are family away from family," said Goonewardene.

Article by Federica Giannelli, with permission, a graduate student intern in the U of S research profile and impact unit.

This article first ran as part of the 2015 Young Innovators series, an initiative of the U of S Research Profile and Impact Office in partnership with the Saskatoon StarPhoenix.



Avian Flu Agreement Signed by Canada, U.S., and Mexico

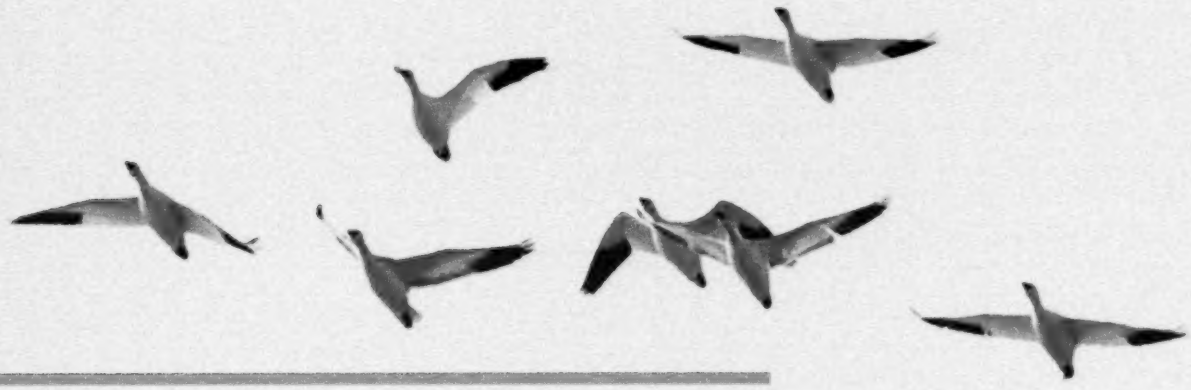
In a display of historic government-industry collaboration, Canada, the United States, and Mexico signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) "Concerning the Control of Notifiable Avian Influenza (NAI) In North America" on January 19 in Los Cabos, Mexico.

The agreement will enhance collaboration on avian influenza and work toward harmonizing procedures for responding to possible future detections of the virus.

The LOU recognizes that the spread of avian influenza by migratory birds is perhaps one of greatest challenges facing the global poultry industry, and that it is incumbent on the partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to harmonize their methods for dealing with AI to keep their poultry production systems safe and sustainable, and to minimize trade disruptions.

The agreement establishes a competent forum to enhance NAI programs and procedures in the three countries by sharing technical information related to the prevention, preparedness, control, and recovery of NAI in domestic poultry, and the risks of NAI posed by migratory birds.

The LOU also establishes a tripartite working group comprised of government animal health officials and industry representatives from the three countries that will serve as a forum for regular scientific discussions on AI. This group will work under the guidance of the North American Animal Health Committee, which includes the regulatory authority for AI from each of the three countries (Canadian Food Inspection Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, National Service of Agro Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality [*Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria* or SENASICA]).



THE SPREAD OF AVIAN INFLUENZA BY MIGRATORY BIRDS IS PERHAPS ONE OF GREATEST CHALLENGES FACING THE GLOBAL POULTRY INDUSTRY

The working group will consider any recommendations involving AI made by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and create joint working sub-groups as necessary to complete shared objectives. To enhance NAI programs and procedures in the three countries, the working group will share technical information, including surveillance data; ensure messages are clear, consistent, proactive and timely; focus on biosecurity; and share information related to compensation.

The signing ceremony was the culmination of discussions that began in late 2014 in Washington, DC, between the United States of America Poultry and Egg Export Council and the Union Nacional de Avicultores, trade organisations that represent the interests of the poultry industries in the U.S. and Mexico.

Signing authorities included the three countries Chief Veterinary Officers (CVO – or their delegates) and representatives from the industry of the three countries. Signing for Canada were: Dr. Harpreet Kochhar, CVO; Neil Newlands, Chief Operating Officer of EFC – signing on behalf of the SM-4 (Canadian broiler, broiler hatching, turkey, and egg farmers); and Robin Horel, President and CEO of the Canadian Poultry & Egg Processors Council.

Rats Pose a Health Risk to Both Poultry and Humans: New Study Findings

Rats can absorb disease agents from their environment and spread them, according to new research from the University of British Columbia.

It has always been suspected that rats can be a source of pathogens for both humans and domestic animals. This is why we don't like them to be in our homes, around our food, or on our farms. But few studies have actually tested rat feces to determine how dangerous they can be.

Researchers tested the feces of rats caught at a B.C. poultry farm, and discovered they all carried avian pathogenic *E. coli*, bacteria with the ability to cause disease in chickens and potentially humans. More than one quarter of the rats were carrying multidrug resistant strains of the bacteria.

The findings support lead author Chelsea Himsworth's theory that rats act as a "pathogen sponge," soaking up bacteria from their environment. Himsworth is assistant professor in the UBC School of Population and Public Health and leader of the *Vancouver Rat Project*.

When different bacteria get together they can actually trade genes that allow them to cause disease or be resistant to antibiotics. The ability of rats to carry a variety of bacteria from different sources might facilitate this sort of gene transfer, which could result in the development of bacteria that are more dangerous that what were present in the first place.

The research also found that the characteristics of pathogens in rats from urban and rural settings were significantly different and resembled the types of pathogens found in the rats' respective environments.

"The presence of harmful *E. coli* and salmonella is not a characteristic of rats themselves. Rather, it's a result of the bacteria present in their environment," concludes Himsworth. "If rats can absorb pathogenic *E. coli*, then they could potentially be a source of all sorts of other pathogens that we have not anticipated."

These findings underscore the importance of pest control on-farm in terms of preventing disease spread to the birds as well as to those working on the farm. Chicken Farmers of Canada's On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program requires an effective pest control program to be in place on the farm, and describes a number of steps or measures that must be taken to ensure its effectiveness.

Source: *http://spph.ubc.ca/rats-pose-health-threat-to-poultry-and-humans-ubc-study/*

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